SCIENCE & GOVERNMENT REPORT

14th Year of Publication

The Independent Bulletin of Science Policy

Volume XIV, Number 2 | P.O. Box 6226A, Washington, D.C. 20015 | February 1, 1984

Agriculture

Washington Parley Ponders Dubious Education "Crisis"

On the basis of her experience as a Washington hostess, Perle Mesta used to say, "Hang a lambchop in the window, and the whole town will show up." The same might be said of the pulling power of Cabinet-level invitations summoning provincial bureaucrats to attend conferences in the nation's capital.

The response rate is astonishing, even when the topic is of low to middling importance and conferring about it will serve little or no purpose. Never mind. They show up, from near and far. And so they did on January 16, when an overflow crowd—probably including some gate crashers—streamed into the National Academy of Sciences for what was titled "The Secretary's Challenge Forum: Investing in Brainpower: Keeping US Agriculture's Competitive Edge."

A Big Conflict of Interest At the AAAS?—Page 5

The Secretary is John Block of the US Department of Agriculture, and the invited attendees were mainly deans and professors of agriculture and executives of agricultural chemical firms—among them E.I. duPont de Nemours and Company, which provided lunch for the gathering.

What was it all about? Well, as problems go in a city that lives off of looking for problems, this one ordinarily couldn't even get on the charts. It seems that the research-manpower forecasters—a notoriously unreliable bunch—are prophesying a bit of a shortage. "A recent study," the assemblage was advised in a background paper, "forecasts the need for about 60,000 new agricultural graduates between now and 1985. Supply projections amount to only about 52,000."

Given that the US is well-populated with specialists of various types, and that mobility from one field to another is commonly practiced in response to job opportunities, that shortfall of 8000 wouldn't seem to be too alarming. The background paper, however, took a deeper view of the situation, noting that "Less than 40 percent of US high school students take three years of science and mathematics, compared with almost 100 percent" in various other countries, among them the cornucopian Soviet Union.

(Continued on page 2)

Space

Price of Shuttle Ride Worries European Partners

London. A good deal of favorable attention has been focused on the international collegiality and scientific program of last fall's maiden flight of the European-manufactured Spacelab aboard the US Space Shuttle.

However, for Europe's scientists—increasingly pressed by the continent's enduring recession— there's a less cheerful side to the venture. And that concerns the colossal price that the 11-nation European Space Agency paid for those 10 days in space: $750 million, spread over a decade, to build the Spacelab, in return for which NASA provided ESA with one "free" flight.

(Continued on page 2)

In Brief

Long weak in the life sciences, and with little insight into the dreams and political cunning of NIH and its hungry clientele in academe, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is whispering that a topflight appointee will soon be added to its staff to fill the gap. The word is that OSTP will even make rare use of one of its long-vacant presidentially filled slots to add luster to the appointment. Who is it? Pending final White House clearance, which is expected soon, Science Adviser George A. Keyworth won't say.

Meanwhile, those five long-running vacancies just below the top at the National Science Foundation are still unfilled. Aides say NSF Director Edward A. Knapp no longer conceals his dismay with White House neglect of the appointments. Keyworth, who has applied all his influence to stirring the White House Office of Personnel Management, is similarly dismayed. The official response to inquiries is that the posts will be filled "soon," "any day," and so forth. Perhaps. But what's to be noted is that the fourth year of a presidential term is departure, rather than arrival, time in Washington.

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), easily the spunkiest in an otherwise drowsy field of scholarly outposts in Washington, has totaled up the number of social and behavioral scientists among the 182 members of NIH's 12 advisory councils. Finding: seven of the members hold degrees in those disciplines; eight of the councils, including the Director's Advisory Council, contain no social or behavioral scientists.

...DuPont VP Sees Hostility to Chemicals

(Continued from page 1)

In any case, Secretary Block warmly related his personal experiences with the increased use of technology in farming, offering praise for weed-controlling chemicals.

Then Presidential Science Adviser George A. Keyworth took up an old theme of his that's been politically becalmed for nearly two years: that too much agricultural research is remote from modern science and that it's that way because the oldtimers in the trade possess the political connections to keep it that way.

"I have very little doubt that there is great potential for unusual advances in agricultural research," Keyworth said in a pasteup speech from previous occasions. But, he pointed out, "Much of the basic biological research up to this point has taken place out of the mainstream of agricultural research—at least in the sense that research often came out of academic biology fields and often at universities without strong agricultural interests."

The key to modernizing agricultural research, he continued, is competition for research money, rather than the comfy formula system that guides the distribution of all but a tiny slice of the Department of Agriculture's R&D spending. But, as all present knew, the beneficiaries of formula money have year after year fought against an expansion of competitive funds.

To soothe their fears, Keyworth repeated past assurances that "competitive grants must not displace important ongoing research programs"—a politically crucial point that he either neglected or underplayed in his first few times out on agricultural research. It's now a set part of the "ag speech."

Keyworth concluded by stating that "Well, the President supports competitive grants. Jack Block supports them. Even David Stockman supports them. But, as you know, some parts of the agriculture community have—for various reasons—been resistant to these mechanisms. If we expect to see the changes I've been discussing, it's going to require active and broad support from the agriculture community. That's something only you can provide."

He was followed by the man from DuPont, Dale E. Wolf, Group Vice President for Agricultural Chemicals. Apparently gripped by a sense of crisis,

(Continued on page 3)

SPACE *(Continued from page 1)*

Thereafter, as specified in the agreement, NASA has acquired title to the lab, and ESA will be charged commercial rates for any further flights—which won't be cheap.

Rent of the cargo bay for a 10-day mission will cost $70 million, which means that with associated costs for training and preparation of experiments, the next Spacelab outing will cost the ESA $180 million. That may be a bargain price for getting into the big leagues of space research. But with combined European R&D spending somewhere around half of the approximately $100 billion a year that US industry and government together spend on R&D, the wisdom of Spacelab looks increasingly doubtful to many European scientists and politicians.

These doubts are shared in West Germany, which put up more than half of Spacelab's development costs, and kept at it, despite cost overruns and long delays, in response to the usual arguments about space technology being a key to modern industrial prowess. Now, though shocked by the high price of the mission, civil servants in Bonn say they are determined to stick with plans for a German Spacelab flight planned for next year.

Other European governments, however, are not rushing to book the Shuttle for Spacelab missions. Over the next few months, ESA will be trying to make up its mind about relations with Spacelab.

Also to be considered is a possible role for ESA in the manned space-station program now germinating in the US. On the basis of an 18-month study, an ESA research group has delineated two possibilities for European participation.

In the first, European firms would manufacture parts for the station. For this purpose, West Germany and Italy are considered strongest, since both did a lot of work on the construction of Spacelab. Furthermore, in 1983, the two governments conducted a joint study, titled "Columbus," on construction of a space station.

The second possibility would involve American use of space components that Europe has already built. One obvious idea is to adapt Spacelab units for living quarters and experimental areas in the space station. A place might also be found for another piece of hardware that Europe is developing, "Eureca," an unmanned platform with its own power supply and propulsion. The ESA planners suggest that it might be the basis for a "space tug" between the space station and flights of the Shuttle on resupply missions.

The Defense Department's participation in a space-station program is seen by some as a block to a European role in the venture, since ESA is a civilian agency and its charter forbids military activities. It seems likely, however, that European governments could easily find a way around this difficulty, if they decide that they want a piece of the space station. With Europe's aerospace industry sharing in hard times, ESA's restrictions on military work will not be the decisive factor.—Peter Marsh

(The author is on the staff of the London *Financial Times.)*

Neglected R&D Report: House Holds Inquest

Unread reports have long been tolerated in Washington as a natural byproduct of government.

So, it was a bit of departure from the norm last week when the House Science and Technology Committee held an inquiry into why scarcely anyone pays attention to its contribution to the report genre: a 1976 statutory mandate directing the White House Science Office to produce an annual report on the condition and future of the national research enterprise.

The answer, known to all even before the morning-long hearing commenced, was that the Science Office so disdains the assignment that it long ago assigned it to the National Science Foundation, which, busy with more important things, contracted most of the task to that pablum mill par excellence, the National Academy of Sciences.

The Academy, which lives off such work, is extremely pleased with its contributions to the three "Outlook" reports which have ensued from these handoffs. However, a survey commissioned by the Committee suggested that hardly anyone else seems to give a hang for this peculiar literature. The surveyors reported that of 647 questionnaires sent to Congressional members and staff, 176 came back; of those, "average ratings of usefulness" ranged from 4 to 7 on a scale of 10. "For some people in and out of Congress," the Committee

(Continued on page 4)

AGRICULTURE *(Continued from page 2)*

Wolf said he would "offer several vignettes that, to me, sum up the gravity of our common problems and suggest how much resistance our strategies and programs must overcome.

"One survey of textbooks used by students from the 4th to 8th grades," he said, "showed repeated instances of pronounced bias against agriculture." What they were, he didn't say.

The second vignette concerned "The son of an Oklahoma wheat farmer [who] returned from school distressed because of a teacher's dogmatic arguments that agricultural chemicals were dangerous and that those who used them were irresponsible. This, mind you," Wolf said, "was being taught by a teacher in the heart of the wheat country."

To an invited audience that was almost all white and wholly male, Wolf urged his colleagues to work to attract more students to careers in agriculture, adding that "minorities are especially reluctant to consider agriculture. Frequently, they equate such careers almost entirely with low technology."

And he also suggested consideration of "sophisticated media programs aimed at bringing up to date the public perception of our industry.

"One important task here," said the Group Vice President for Agricultural Chemicals, "is to convince the public of the utter necessity of using safe and modern techniques to maintain high productivity."

At times it was difficult to tell whether the meeting was a crop-duster rally or an educational conference.—DSG

Table of Contents

What's in those "Outlook" reports? As one witness told the House Science and Technology Committee, the contents resemble encyclopedia articles on contemporary science.

The latest report, "Frontiers in Science and Technology: A Selected Outlook," contains individual chapters by leading researchers in eight fields:

The Genetic Program of Complex Organisms, by Maxine Singer, National Cancer Institute

The Molecular and Genetic Technology of Plants, by Joseph E. Varner, Washington University

Cells Receptors for Hormones and Neurotransmitters, H. Guy Williams-Ashman, University of Chicago

Psychobiology, by Steven Hillyard, UC San Diego

Surface Science and its Applications, Homer D. Hagstrum, Bell Labs

Turbulence in Fluids, William V.R. Malkus,

Lasers, C. Kumar N. Patel, Bell Labs

The New Generation of Robots, Jacob T. Schwartz, NYU; David Grossman, IBM

It's useful stuff for term papers and similar endeavors, but as witnesses pointed out to the Committee, of little or no use in the hurly-burly of Congressional decisionmaking.

ISSN 0048-9581

©Science & Government Report, Inc., 1984

Editor and Publisher **Daniel S. Greenberg**
Associate Publisher **Wanda J. Reif**
Circulation Manager **Margaret Lee**

Contributing Correspondents
Christopher Joyce (Washington); Francois Seguier (Paris); Ros Herman (London)

Independently published by *Science & Government Report*, Inc., twice monthly, except in January, July & August. Annual subscription: Institutions, $144.00 (two years, $255.00). Information about bulk and individual rates upon request. Editorial offices at 3736 Kanawha St. Nw., Washington, DC 20015. Tel. (202) 244-4135. Second-class postage at Washington, DC. Please address all subscription correspondence to Box 6226A, Northwest Station, Washington, DC 20015. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. SGR is available on Xerox University Microfilms. Claims for missing back issues will be filled without charge if made within six months of publication date.

...Of No Use to Us, Says White House Office

(Continued from page 4)

was told, "the different 'Outlooks' have been extremely useful...Others thought they were worthless, a waste of time and money."

The oddest testimony of a generally languid morning was provided by James G. Ling, an Assistant Director at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). He informed the Committee that OSTP derived no benefit from the reports because "we had enough expertise in all the areas covered by the report so that we learned nothing new."

Ling added that "The report occasionally described Administration policy that we had developed, and that was not very informative to us."

Rep. Buddy MacKay (D-Fla.) thereupon reminded the witness that the report was intended to inform Congress, among others, of Administration science policy, and that it was not surprising that the designated producer of the report was familiar with its contents. Ling replied that "I was commenting on its utility to us."

Other witnesses were George Low, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, who chairs the Academy Committee that oversees preparation of the report, and Floyd E. Bloom, a neurobiologist at the Salk Institute, who headed the Academy study group that produced the latest "Outlook" report. Neither shed much light on the causes of the world's indifference to their product.

Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-Calif.) asked whether the next edition could give Congress some money-saving policy guidance on played-out fields. Low shrugged that off with the observation that committees of Academy scientists are not the best place to seek economies. "Too many people are afraid to step on other people's toes,"he said.

What got left out of the hearing was discussion of the political genesis of the "Outlook" reports. They grew out of Congressional frustration with the Nixon Administration's highhanded treatment of science-policy affairs, including Nixon's unilateral abolition of OSTP's predecessor, the Office of Science and Technology. Egged on by the elders of science, who resented their banishment from the White House, the House Science and Technology Committee persuaded Gerald Ford to recreate a presidential science shop. And to hold that office accountable and give Congress a window on Executive actions in science and technology, a requirement for an annual report was written into the legislation that created OSTP.

The only real news from the hearing is that work is underway on the fourth edition of the "Outlook" report. Hundreds, if not thousands, of other unread reports have been wiped out by Reagan economies. But they were not born by Act of Congress.—DSG

"Do It Yourself" Advice

The folly of Congress relying on the White House for surveying the condition and opportunities of American science was argued last week in testimony before the House Science and Technology Committee by Richard A. Rettig, Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences at the Illinois Institute of Technology. Following are excerpts from his testimony:

Is the Congress capable of assuming this responsibility. I believe so. In any event, it is far from clear that they would be less well served by doing it directly than by asking the Executive Branch to do it for them.

There was a time twenty years ago when the Congress depended very extensively upon the President and the then-Office of Science and Technology for leadership on scientific and technological matters. But many changes have occurred since President Eisenhower appointed the Science Adviser to the President in 1957 and President Kennedy created the OST in 1962.

For one thing, it is harder today for a centralized administrative agency to keep track of everything of consequence in science and technology. The elite cadre of scientists and engineers on whom the country depended for so long, and who served it so well, have essentially passed from the scene. They went to "school" in World War II—the MIT Radiation Laboratory, Los Alamos or some other Manhattan Project Laboratory, or elsewhere in the wartime R&D effort. Their common characteristics of youth, training in the physical sciences, and affiliation with a relatively few prestigious universities, when coupled with the World War II experience, suited them well to direct and advise the then much smaller scientific and technical enterprise of the...government.

Today's generation of key scientists and engineers, by contrast, have gone to many different "schools"—the national space program, medical research, weapons laboratories, industrial research and development, and the regulation of health, safety, and environment. They manifest none of the coherence of the older group and their differences count far more than their similarities. This change alone makes it more difficult for the executive branch to centrally monitor the science and technology enterprise. A decentralized institution like the Congress can perhaps relate to this diversity among scientists and engineers more effectively than a centralized administrative entity.

Slipping on a Piel?

"Scientific American" Chief to Head AAAS

Among old-fashioned cranks who are sensitive to the fussy concept of conflict of interest, raised eyebrows are in evidence concerning the election of Gerald Piel, publisher of *Scientific American,* to the presidency-elect of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, publisher of *Science84.*

SGR took the matter up with William Carey, Executive Officer of the AAAS, and was assured that "there's no conflict whatever." Carey described his organization's magazine as "a wholly different product" from that of Piel's and added that "we're not going to let a small potential question get in the way of the honor of having" Piel as head of the AAAS.

The four-year-old *Science84,* which appears 10 times yearly, is a smartly edited pop counterpart of the notoriously turgid but fabulously successful *Scientific American.* The two magazines have approximately the same circulation, 550,000 for *Scientific American,* 700,000 for *Science84,* and often cover the same subjects, and fish in the same advertising pool.

Piel, who has long been active in AAAS affairs, was elected by the customary mail ballot last fall. The election reflected the frequent AAAS practice of pitting a well-known name against a not-so-well-known one. In this case, it was Gerald Piel vs. Ronald Geballe, a physicist at the University of Washington. In accord with AAAS policy, the number of votes for the candidates was not disclosed. "It's an internal matter," SGR was advised by a spokesperson.

When he's installed as president-elect next May, Piel will be on the first step of an automatic annual progression to the presidency and then the chairmanship of the Board of AAAS, which is the policymaking body for the 136,000-member organization and its various subsidiaries.

Meanwhile, the conceiver and founding editor of *Science 84,* Allan Hammond, will be taking on a second editorship, if the National Academy of Sciences proceeds with plans to found a policy quarterly. Titled *Issues in Science and Technology,* the Academy journal is currently undergoing marketing tests that were designed under Hammond's supervision. His fee for that chore is reported to have been $32,000, from which sum he paid out half for design and planning costs. If the tests results are favorable, as is expected, Hammond will be "on loan" to the Academy for at least six issues while continuing at the AAAS as editor of *Science84.*

The Academy plans to invest $1 million in the journal with the aim of achieving a break-even circulation of 40,000 in four years. A memo states that the publication "will make more visible—and raise the quality of—the national debate on policy issues involving science, technology, and health. While other journals publish on these topics," the memo states, "none does it solely and none carries the prestige, resources, and authority of" the Academy.

The decision on whether to proceed will be made late this month; if it's favorable, the first issue will be scheduled for around mid-year.

Academy Sets Up Forum on University Problems

A Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable has been established by the National Academy of Sciences for hashing out problems that universities are encountering in dealings with the other two.

Dale Corson, former President of Cornell University, is to be the Chairman. The crucial post of Executive Director will be filled by an old Washington hand, Don I. Phillips, a Harvard PhD chemist who has served as science adviser to the Governor of North Carolina since 1979. Prior to that, Phillips was involved in science-policy studies at the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

A suggestion for a forum resembling the newborn roundtable was made in 1980 by a freestanding conglomeration of university lobbyists who called themselves the National Commission on Research. Through the customary process of incestuous descent, the idea then popped up again in a report last year by the NAS Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, and has since received favorable, if not intensely interested, nods from the President's Science Adviser and other notables.

According to a memo, the Roundtable will be governed by a Council of 9 to 11 individuals appointed by the President of the Academy with the approval of the Academy Council.

Says the memo: "These individuals will be persons of distinction, maturity and balance with an understanding of the critical roles of research and research training in achieving national goals; knowledge of the programmatic objectives, operational constraints, and organizational and political realities which characterize the government as it pursues the national interest" and so on.

In Quotes: Academy Chief on Industrial Ties

Excerpts from an address, "The Good and Bad News About University-Industry Partnerships," by Frank Press, President of the National Academy of Sciences, January 11, at the dedication of a laser chemistry building at Howard University:

●

You have to remember that companies are not charitable institutions. They want something from the universities, and that something is not simply knowledge. It is also people. The new partnerships can be seen as people sharing, as a way of leveraging a limited supply of talent. When an industry or company supports a research university, and in doing so gains access to the results, it doesn't have to hire the people. Nor does it have to build the laboratories and supply the instruments these people will demand. Bluntly put, industry knows that skilled and bright graduate students are one of the last remaining pools of high-quality labor in the world. Very few companies can match that talent, even at a much higher price.

●

The industrial contribution to academic research expenditures is about one-half of one percent of the total national R&D spending, which in 1984 will be about $97 billion. Also, and more directly relevant to your purposes here, industry's fraction of the total academic research budget in constant dollars has stayed between three and four percent the past 20 years. If other contributions are added in, then the fraction rises to six percent. As a comparative, these amounts are a fraction of the NIH or the NSF budget. Another way to get perspective...is that of the leading 200 research universities, only 25...got more than 10 percent of their R&D expenditures from industry.

●

...both partners recognize the risks to the university embedded in their relationship....How do we reconcile free dissemination [of new knowledge] with the industrial imperative to gain a march on competitors, especially if one has paid for the research?....How does a researcher justify withholding publication for six months for commercial reasons but not when the government asks him to do the same for reasons of national security?

And how do we deal with the corrosive, if not destructive, tensions created within a university by some departments, and some individuals, becoming rich? How do universities give a proper accounting when public and private support funds commingle on a given research project? How do we avoid the perception—real or not—by students, notably graduate students, that faculty distracted by industrial ties are not giving them fair measure?

These...questions...testify to candor. And they are being asked of virtually every relationship between a university and an industry or company.

●

That then is the good news. We have a sense of the scale, of the history, and of the risks. What is the bad news? It is that it ain't easy. Constructing relationships that...truly benefit both the university and the corporation is immensely difficult. It is very easy to slip from a supposedly symbiotic partnership to one that is simply contract research. While the monetary gains of such a relationship for the short-term may be considerable, the long-term damage to the university can be considerable. Academic excellence and corporate funding are not fungible.

●

What does it take to build...ties...which are more than simple philanthropy? I can answer that best with an example [of] the remarkable series of relationships which the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has built the past several years....RPI experience illustrates that relationships flower when what universities have is compatible with the academic ethic and also something that industry needs...

You have to make industry come to you. Again, that is not easy....Industry money still tends to go to the academic haves, not the have-nots. Also remember that relationships can be fickle, that as economic pressures lessen, industry may see less compelling reasons to invest money in basic research...

Expanded Research Schedule For Retiring Smithsonian Head

S. Dillon Ripley says he will spend a lot more time in his ornithology laboratory when he retires in September after 20 years as Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Throughout his tenure, Ripley usually spent a day a week in the lab, which is located in the Museum of Natural History. Ripley, who will become Secretary Emeritus, will be succeeded by Robert McCormick Adams, an anthropologist and archeologist who has been Provost of the University of Chicago for the past two years.

By matrimonial connection, the Smithsonian appointment, announced last week, will vacate the editorship of the Chicago-based *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.* Adams' wife, Ruth, currently serving a second tour as editor, told SGR she'll give up that post and probably serve as a Washington correspondent for the magazine.

In Print: Federal "Health Profile," OTA Pubs

National Health Expenditures and Percent Distribution

Type of Expenditure	1950	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1981	1982
				Amount in billions				
Total	$12.7	$26.9	$41.7	$74.7	$132.7	$249.0	$286.6	$322.4
				Percent distribution				
All expenditures	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Health services and supplies	92.4	93.6	91.6	92.8	93.7	95.2	95.4	95.6
Personal health care	86.0	88.0	85.7	87.3	88.0	88.1	88.8	89.0
Hospital care	30.4	33.8	33.3	37.2	39.3	40.3	41.2	42.0
Physician services	21.7	21.1	20.3	19.2	18.8	18.8	19.1	19.2
Dentist services	7.6	7.4	6.7	6.4	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.0
Nursing home care	1.5	2.0	5.0	6.3	7.6	8.3	8.4	8.5
Other professional services	3.1	3.2	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.2
Drugs and drug sundries	13.6	13.7	12.4	10.7	9.0	7.8	7.4	6.9
Eyeglasses and appliances	3.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.0	1.8
Other health services	4.2	4.0	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.4
Expenses for prepayment	3.6	4.1	4.0	3.6	3.3	4.3	3.9	4.0
Government public health activities	2.9	1.5	1.9	1.9	2.4	2.8	2.7	2.7
Research and construction	7.6	6.4	8.4	7.2	6.3	4.8	4.6	4.4
Research	0.9	2.5	3.6	2.6	2.5	2.1	2.0	1.8
Construction	6.7	3.9	4.8	4.6	3.8	2.6	2.6	2.6

From: Health United States and Prevention 1983

Health United States and Prevention Profile 1983, latest in the federal government's annual series covering vital statistics, utilization of health-care resources, expenditures, some comparative international data, plus a bit of data on research (see table).

(DHHS Publication No. PHS 84-1232, 394 pages, price unavailable, Supt. of Documents, USGPO, Washington, DC 20402).

●

Commercial Biotechnology: An International Analysis, report by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, surveys the world, concludes that the US is far ahead and highly competitive in this booming field, that Europe lags, while Japan is coming up fast. To meet that competition, OTA says, the US will have to "direct more attention to research problems associated with scaling-up of bioprocesses for production."

(Stock No. 052-003-00939-1, 612 pages, $20, Supt. of Documents, as above.)

●

US Passenger Rail Technologies, an OTA report, says data is insufficient to foresee whether US rail demand could justify the high construction costs required for the type of high-speed service in Japan, Britain and France, but available evidence suggests that needed passenger density is lacking.

(Stock No. 052-003-00938-2, 105 pages, $4.75, Supt. of Documents, as above.)

NSF Issues Academic Data

The National Science Foundation has announced the availability of its latest collection of all sorts of data—including enrollments, faculty size, budgets, grants—at most of the nation's universities and many non-profit research institutions. The material is on magnetic tape and on paper. For additional information: NSF, Universities and Nonprofit Institutions Studies Group, Room L-602, 1800 G St. Nw., Washington, DC 20550; tel. 202/634-4673.

Subscription Form

Science & Government Report
Northwest Station
Box 6226A
Washington, D.C. 20015

☐ Renew my subscription; ☐ Check enclosed
☐ Enter my subscription; ☐ Please bill
Institutional subscribers: one year, $144.00 ☐
two years, $255.00 ☐
(Overseas airmail, $25.00 per year additional.)

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Cancer Society Hit Again on Environmental Role

An orchestrated public relations campaign is underway to embarrass the rich and cautious American Cancer Society into taking a more vigorous role against environmental carcinogens. ACS, the biggest of the health charities, has aroused the ire of various health-related public-interest groups by generally shunning all but tobacco as a target of political action. Tobacco, of course, long ago became safe, fair game.

On the heels of a publicly announced cancellation of the annual ACS donation by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (SGR Vol. XIV, No. 1), 24 scientists and health specialists of one sort or another have publicly assailed the ACS. Their main claim, matching that of the union's, is that the ACS has failed to support, and has even been hostile to, "legislation that seeks to reduce or eliminate exposure to environmental and occupational hazards."

The statement endorsed by the signatories expressed particular opposition to ACS guidelines that require a concurrence of both animal and human data to trigger warnings of carcinogenicity. The guidelines allow for warnings of risk on the basis of animal data alone, but the 24 critics point out that "ACS traditionally has never lobbied effectively on any proven human carcinogen except tobacco, and has refrained from adopting a position on almost all human carcinogens." It was noted, too, that in the case of saccharin, ACS opposed the FDA's ban in favor of recommendations for moderate use.

It was also charged that "ACS refuses to join a coalition of major organizations, including the March of Dimes, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association, to support the clean Air Act." ACS, the statement noted, "has rejected requests from Congressional subcommittees, unions, and environmental organizations to support their efforts to ban or regulate a wide range of occupational and environmental carcinogens."

In response to SGR's inquiry, Lawrence Garfinkel, ACS Vice President for Epidemiology and Statistics, said, "We've pioneered in cancer prevention," a reference, he explained, to ACS's anti-tobacco campaigns. He added that "ACS is necessarily cautious and conservative. We don't take a position on every study [of potential carcinogens] that comes out."

Among the signers of the statement critical of ACS were:

Matthew Meselson, Professor of Biology, Harvard

Eula Bingham, Vice President of the University of Cincinnati, former Director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Anthony Robbins, former Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

Samuel Epstein, Professor of Occupational and Environmental Health, University of Illinois Medical Center

David Wegman, Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health, UCLA.

The statement was circulated to the press by the Washington-based Center for Science in the Public Interest, an independent, Nader-style organization whose Health Charities Reform Project has taken a keen interest in the $200-million-a-year ACS.

Science & Government Report
Northwest Station
Box 6226A
Washington, D.C. 20015

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

9999

Xerox-University Microfilms
300 N. Zeeb Rd
Ann Arbor MI 48106